

Timeline: The Early Cold War

General Historical Events

Diplomatic Documents & Events

1946

- Jan: Chinese Civil War resumes
- Mar: Civil War begins in Greece
- Dec: French send troops to Indochina

- Feb: George Kennan's Long Telegram
- Mar: Churchill's Iron Curtain Speech
- Dec: International Convention on Whaling

1947

- Apr: Term "Cold War" is coined
- Aug: India and Pakistan given independence by British

- Mar: Truman Doctrine
- June: Marshall Plan
- Sept: Rio Treaty

1948

- Feb: Communists seize control in Czechoslovakia
- June: Soviets block land routes to Berlin—Airlift begins
- Nov: US Consul & staff taken hostage by Chinese communists

- UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- May: Charter of the Organization of American States
- Letter from the Provisional Government of Israel to the US
- The United States Recognizes Israel
- Arthur Vandenberg's Observations on China

1949

- Apr: North Atlantic Treaty Organization founded
- Aug: USSR detonates first atomic weapon
- Oct: Communists take over government in Peking

- Apr: The North Atlantic Treaty Organization
- Aug: The Geneva Convention on the Protection of Civilians in War
- The Geneva Convention on the Treatment of POWs

1950

- Feb: USSR and China sign mutual defense pact
- May: Creation of the European Community
- June: War begins on Korean Peninsula
- Oct: Chinese Communist forces invade Korea

- Jan: Secretary Acheson on US Far Eastern Policy
- Feb: Enemies from Within
- A Nest of Communists
- Apr: Excerpts from NSC-68
- July: On a Certain Impatience with Latin America

1952

- June: Marshall Plan ends
- July: Gamal Abdel Nasser leads coup in Egypt
- Nov: Dwight Eisenhower elected President
- US tests first thermonuclear bomb
- Great Britain tests first atomic bomb

- May: A New Policy of Boldness

1953

- Mar: Stalin dies
- July: Armistice in Korea
- Aug: Shah of Iran, backed by US, returns to power in Iran
- Sept: Khrushchev becomes leader of Soviet communist party

- Sept: Guatemala: A Serious Threat to the Hemisphere
- Oct: Mutual Defense Treaty: US & the Republic of Korea
- Dec: Atoms for Peace

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May: French defeated in Indochina
June: Leftist government in Guatemala overthrown
Aug: Crisis in the Taiwan Straits
Sept: SEATO Alliance forms

Story of a Covert Operation

Oct: US Involvement in Vietnam begins Quietly

1955

Mar: USSR begins sending aid to Syria
May: 9 West Germany joins NATO
14 USSR forms Warsaw Pact in Eastern Europe

Feb: The Baghdad Pact

1956

July: Nasser nationalizes the Suez Canal
Oct: Soviets suppress revolution in Hungary
Suez Crisis rocks Middle East

1957

Nov: Khrushchev declares missile superiority over US

Jan: Eisenhower Doctrine on the Middle East

Nov: The Dramatic Impact of Sputnik

1959

Jan: Fidel Castro leads revolution in Cuba
Dec: Viet Cong form to overthrow South Vietnam

Dec: The Antarctic Treaty

1960

Feb: France tests first atomic weapon
June: Sino-Soviet Split

Sept: A Soviet View of World Events

1961

Jan: Eisenhower closes US Embassy in Havana/
Severs relations diplomatic relations with Cuba

Jan: Dangers of the Military-Industrial Complex